



## Chapter 5

# Best Practices

### Routes to Success: Some Examples That Work



#### **Strategy: Paid Structured Learning**

Partner: TECH 2000/Verizon (formerly Bell Atlantic New Jersey)

TECH 2000 is a school-based telecommunications training program for high school juniors and seniors, postsecondary students, and adults returning to school. The program's goal is to create a telecommunications-literate workforce and a school-to-career transition for New Jersey's telecommunications industry. The partnership started as PROJECT SMART at Ocean County Vocational School in 1993. It has been expanded to additional sites in cooperation with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and vocational schools throughout the state. More than 400 students are enrolled in the two-year program, and there are several new sites in the planning stage. To date, a large percentage of students are employed in industry. The program was selected by the U.S. Department of Education as one of the ten best school-to-career programs in the nation in 1996, and it has also received a number of state and local awards. The Mercer County Workforce Investment Board is working to replicate the program for the growing hospitality industry in the state's capital region.

For more information, contact:  
Educational Relations – External Affairs  
Verizon New Jersey  
(973) 649-5011

**Strategy: Serving Students with Disabilities****Partner: Atlantic County Special Services School District (ACSSSD)**

In partnership with local gaming businesses, ACSSSD provides a comprehensive training program for disabled students. After initial preparation in ACSSSD's school-based component, students have an opportunity to progress into the work-based component, which offers structured learning experiences in various departments. ACSSSD conducts a supervised rotational program that exposes students to the types of positions available in the gaming industry. A full-time teacher is placed at each site to provide support to students and the work-site mentor. Students prepare for work at the casinos by first working at a local nursing home, hospital, or community college under the close supervision of the teacher and employee mentors. The mentors teach work skills, as well as industry culture and norms. As students become more independent and confident, master skills, and develop good work habits, they advance to the next level of training at one of three participating casino/hotel properties in Atlantic City. Students work every day and learn job-specific skills, improve work habits, and develop social skills that are necessary for success in entry-level positions in business and industry. Students either are hired into permanent positions after they participate in training at the work sites, or they find employment elsewhere with the help of the teacher and the service agencies that work with the school.

For more information, contact:  
School-to-Career Project Coordinator  
Atlantic County Special Services School District  
(609) 625-5663

**Strategy: Apprenticeship****Partner: International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners**

The International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners provided a secondary-level carpentry curriculum to area vocational schools and high schools that offer carpentry programs. The curriculum materials provided by the brotherhood include major tasks and competencies, lists of hand tools and equipment, and health and safety information, all of which can be used alone or in conjunction with the established curriculum. Materials were presented in both floppy disk and CD-ROM formats. Reference materials pertaining to the history of labor-management relations were identified. The unions provided training to classroom teachers of carpentry in the use of the materials. Districts that employ the curriculum materials will ensure that students who successfully complete the program will be competitive in meeting the entrance requirements of the New Jersey unions affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners.

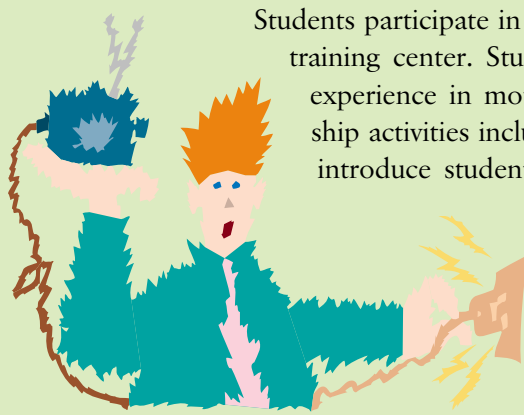


For more information, contact:  
**Apprenticeship Coordinator**  
New Jersey Department of Education  
(609) 984-5906

**Strategy: Apprenticeship**

**Partner:** International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, LU 351, New Jersey

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) provides technical assistance to partnering vocational-technical schools to align their electrical curriculum with the IBEW's entrance requirements for apprenticeship. In some instances, districts have implemented the IBEW National Apprenticeship and Training Committee's math book. In others, the IBEW has reviewed the district curriculum to ensure that it includes the math requirements. The IBEW has conducted mock employment interviews for participating students.



Students participate in lab activities at the IBEW's apprenticeship and training center. Students use programmable controllers and gain experience in motor control and basic circuitry. Other partnership activities include outreach to two alternative high schools to introduce students to careers in the electrical trades. Students who successfully complete the IBEW's Youth Transitions to Work (YTTW) program are eligible to apply for the local union's electrical apprenticeship program.

For more information, contact:  
**Apprenticeship Coordinator**  
New Jersey Department of Education  
(609) 984-5906

**Strategy: Career Pathway****Partner: Jersey Shore Hospital**

The Monmouth County Vocational School District's medical and health curriculum offers students real-life experiences. In the freshman year, students are introduced to various health careers and volunteer positions through guest speakers and trips to local healthcare facilities, e.g., a local cerebral palsy school or a senior center. In the sophomore year, students participate in a six-week rotation program at a local hospital. Learners are assigned to assist staff and get a firsthand glimpse at the workings of a hospital. In the junior year, students research a specific need in the community and create a plan for addressing the need. All of the students write a grant proposal for their plan. The best proposals are chosen and students collectively work toward implementing the plan in their communities. In the past, a group of students cleaned up and rebuilt a playground at a local child-care center, and another group created a video that informs middle school students about the dangers of drinking and driving. The students' experiences culminate in the senior year when all students participate in an internship program with a local business or healthcare facility. The internships are diverse and have included placements with pediatricians, primary care physicians, hospitals, substance-abuse centers, county human services departments, nutritionists, and a health program for a cable television network.



Students have the opportunity to gain college credit before graduating from high school through a joint program with a university. Character education has been incorporated into the health curriculum, and students study ethics and practice ethical decision making.

Internship performance and job preparation skills are evaluated through a career portfolio and mentor feedback.

For more information, contact:  
**Monmouth County Vocational School District**  
(732) 775-0058

**Strategy: Career Pathway****Partner: Varies**

As early as seventh grade, students and their parents are invited to attend a Career Magnet Fair that highlights district programs from each high school. Upon acceptance into a Career Academy, students are expected to perform at a high academic level and compete for participation in industry training programs, summer internships, and senior year youth apprenticeships. By their junior year of high school, successful students are placed in training programs provided by industry partners. Here they are expected to put their classroom skills into practice in the workplace and also bring back to the classroom the confidence and expertise they have gained from their on-site work assignments. This continues with a summer internship and a senior year youth apprenticeship. Upon completion of all program requirements, students take an industry proficiency test. These are developed by national organizations and approved by the state.

For more information, contact:  
School-to-Career Project Director  
Jersey City Public Schools  
(201) 915-6225

**Strategy: Industry Training****Partner: Merrill Lynch**

Merrill Lynch provides a comprehensive work-based learning program to Jersey City public schools. Tenth-grade students in the business and marketing magnet program participate in an industry-specific career day with the employer. In the eleventh grade, the students participate in a half-day training program that acquaints students with all aspects of the industry. The employer provides a summer internship for high school seniors that prepares students to successfully obtain employment with Merrill Lynch or to compete in the marketplace.

For more information, contact:  
School-to-Career Project Director  
Jersey City Public Schools  
(201) 915-6225

**Strategy: Service Learning/Structured Learning Experience****Partner: Varies**

The Pupil Assisted Learning Service (PALS) program is a community-based service learning program that enables students to make a difference by helping others. Tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-grade students spend one or two periods of the school day performing service work at one of a variety of sites, which may include large and small businesses, colleges, hospitals, elementary schools, day-care centers, government agencies, theaters, and nursing homes. Students are not paid for their service work, but they receive credit for their participation. PALS teachers work with the students and community sponsors and serve as a link between the school and the community. They match student interests with sponsor needs, counsel students, visit sites, and evaluate learning experiences and students' progress.

For more information, contact:

**Lakewood Coordinator**  
(732) 905-3581

**Strategy: Entrepreneurial Activities****Partner: NA**

Students and teachers learn a great deal about the world of work by operating the entrepreneurial businesses within their schools. By developing, making, and distributing a product, students gain experience in the many aspects of running a successful business. Eight entrepreneurial programs are operating at four high schools, one vocational-technical school, one middle school, one elementary school, and one special-needs school. Examples of the products distributed include furniture, buttons, gift baskets, crafts and wreaths, popcorn, and embroidered and/or screen-printed activewear. The students are responsible for all aspects of their business, including marketing, advertising, production, accounting, sales, and inventory. Each program is monitored in February, the midway point, and again in June at the end of the program. All profits from the businesses are reinvested into the business funds.

For more information, contact:

**Tech-Prep Project Director**  
**Union County College**  
(908) 965-2999

**Strategy: Promoting Industry Awareness****Partners: Wakefern Corporation, Kellogg Foundation, and ShopRite Supermarkets**

The Young Consumers Program is based on the belief that learning is everyone's business and that it extends beyond the classroom. During the 1998-1999 school year, two fourth-grade pilot programs were successfully completed at Lopatcong School in Warren County and Penn Beach School in Salem County. The pilot has been expanded to train fourth-grade teachers in Salem and Bergen Counties. The program activities include classroom preparation, family orientation, a compulsory shopping activity, minds-in-motion challenges and communication exercises. In a key program component, students, working in pairs, plan meals and purchase food in a local supermarket to feed a family of four for a week within a fixed budget. Partnerships with community businesses facilitate program activities and field experiences. The pilot programs were sponsored by ShopRite Supermarkets, Progressive Publishing and Mid-Atlantic Consortium (MAC) of Colleges.

For more information, see also the Young Consumer Program vignette or contact:

**Ramapo College**  
**Learning Resource Center**  
**(201) 684-7886**







### **Strategy: School-Based Enterprise/ Structured Learning Experience**

**Partner: Little Egg Harbor Bagel Cart**

The Bagel Express School-Based Entrepreneurial Project helps students develop basic business skills. One hundred students from twenty-six middle, junior high, and secondary schools in Atlantic, Cape May, and Cumberland Counties participate in the program. Each location features a custom-made entrepreneurial cart, equipment, inventory, information, and materials to initiate and operate a stand-alone, portable, school-based retail business. Students and staff use computers donated by corporations to access The National Grocers Association Front End Associate Skills and Competency list or the Bagel Express Booklet and Skills checklist. The materials are used to train and certify workers in the retail food industry. Student workers are fully engaged in the learning process and attain many of the identified New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards as they serve school-based customers in a true-to-life learning environment. The student participants record entries from daily sales, count money, perform customer service tasks, inventory stock, plan merchandising and marketing activities and complete bank deposits. The profits are reinvested in each enterprise in the form of U.S. savings bonds, stipends, new equipment, class trips, and community-service projects.



For more information, contact:  
**Eagle Enterprises**  
**Egg Harbor Twp. High School**  
**(609) 653-8804**

**Strategy: School-Based Enterprise/  
Structured Learning Experience****Partner: NA**

Several school-based enterprises operate as part of the ATTAIN (Advocating the Teaching of Transition According to Individual Needs) program. Students participate in transitional academic classes and career classes, several of which operate the student enterprises. One class operates a Bagel Express business, which provides students with the opportunity to practice, in a realistic setting, content areas presented in the classroom, e.g., banking, money transactions, bookkeeping, and interpersonal skills. The building-trades class operates a Sheds-R-Us business in which students construct and sell storage sheds and other woodcrafts. The students use equipment, materials, and procedures used at actual construction sites. Development of appropriate work behaviors and attitudes and job-specific skills takes place in this environment. The manufacturing-career class makes and sells contracted items to small businesses or individuals, including boardwalk pieces, novelty candles, seasonal cards, and professional signs. The food-service class operates Snack Attack. Students learn and practice appropriate communication, math, and money-handling skills while preparing and selling special hot food items. The life-skills class operates a produce stand. Students take orders; sort, weigh, bag, and deliver produce; price orders; and collect payments. Students practice customer-service skills and money-handling skills including the use of a cash register. Another group of students produces and sells holiday cards. Students participate in the design and production of the cards, as well as packaging, sales, and distribution. All of the school-based enterprises enable students to have hands-on, realistic vocational experiences. Profits are used to cover the costs of each enterprise and for student activities or individual student compensation.

For more information, contact:  
**Atlantic County Special Services School District**  
**(609) 625-5663**

**Strategy: School-Based Learning/ Microsociety****Partner: NA**

The Microsociety approach to education uses the school setting to help students develop an understanding of institutions, markets, and jobs. This approach offers students the opportunity to increase their academic knowledge by practicing skills and exploring a variety of career interests. Students are paid “school money” for good attendance, behavior, and work performance. With their accrued money, students can purchase items at regularly scheduled in-school “Mall Days” during which student-made items and donated gifts are sold. In addition to Mall Day purchases, students can buy items from the school store and tickets to special school events on a daily basis. Students also learn to pace their spending and to save for important events.

For more information, contact:  
Clifton Avenue Grade School  
Lakewood School District  
(732) 905-3650

**Strategy: Mentoring****Partner: Washington Township Chamber of Commerce**

The Washington Township Chamber of Commerce has spearheaded a mentoring program designed to help high school students clarify their career goals through interaction with business leaders. Each student is paired with an employee mentor who helps the student learn specific skills and knowledge. The programs at Washington Township High School and Glassboro High School call for high school juniors and seniors to intern at various Chamber of Commerce employer sites. Internship positions are available in retail businesses, banks, restaurants, health service organizations, local government agencies, and other organizations. The students gain an understanding of the knowledge, competencies, attitudes, and daily activities required to perform the duties of the occupations they choose to pursue.

For more information, contact:  
Washington Township High School  
Sewell, NJ  
(609) 589-8500, ext. 7036

**Strategy: Integrating School-Based Learning  
and Structured Learning****Partner: NA**

The Abraham Clark High School Health Occupations program is an academic program for students who have significant interest in pursuing careers in the health field. The program offers three sequential courses. The first course, Health Careers, is an introduction to various techniques, medical terminology, and professions associated with the health-care industry. The course is offered to sophomores and juniors at Abraham Clark High School and in another school district through distance learning (ITV). The second course, Health Occupations, introduces juniors and seniors to the health-care environment while supplementing further classroom instruction with clinical hands-on experience. Students work for two hours each day at an acute health-care facility or a long-term health-care facility. Students shadow a health-care professional and learn about the world of work. The final course, Health Occupations Co-op, is offered to senior students who successfully complete the prerequisite courses, maintain excellent attendance, and demonstrate good citizenship. Co-op students work in a health-related facility and receive compensation for their work.

For more information, contact:  
**Abraham Clark High School**  
Roselle, NJ  
(908) 298-3367

**Strategy: Peer Mentoring****Partner: NA**

The Morristown High School's peer mentoring program trains high school students to be mentors. The program provides opportunities for students to make a difference in a child's or a troubled teenager's life. To participate in the program, a student must first complete the United Way of Morris County's twelve-hour Mentor Training program. The United Way program focuses on the roles, rights, and responsibilities of the mentor. Graduates of the program receive a certificate of completion.

For more information, contact:  
**Morristown High School**  
(973) 292-4803

**Strategy: Guidance and Counseling****Partner: NA**

All ninth-grade students meet three times a week in a classroom setting with their guidance counselor. The course covers the following topics: self-esteem; communication; coping with peer pressure; getting along with others; stress and conflict; understanding needs, wants, values, and goals; interest inventories; aptitude inventories; job leads and classified ads; job applications; job interviews; Internet sites and career and college information; vocational guidance; maintaining a career portfolio; current events in the world of work;

steps in decision-making; required job skills; responding to constructive criticism; team-building; and work ethics.



The various methods of instruction used include group activities, video presentations, research projects, administration of interest and career inventories, application of the Bridges software program, and maintenance of a career portfolio.

Three specific measures are available to document the program success. All ninth-grade students successfully complete the following program components using the Bridges career exploration program: a values inventory, a skills inventory, an interest inventory, an investigation of suggested careers; requests for career materials; and analysis of career information. A career folder is completed by each student. This folder is updated and revised throughout the student's high school experience. An assessment instrument is administered.

For more information, contact:  
**High Point Regional High School**  
Sussex, NJ  
(973) 875-8103

**Strategy: Guidance and Counseling**

Partner: NA

The Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) is an important tool that increases a student's knowledge of the various careers that exist in today's marketplace and his or her awareness of the importance of career planning. This folder follows the student's progress in career development from kindergarten to grade six. Younger students are asked to think about the careers that are of interest to them, and they are encouraged to learn about a variety of careers.

The ICAP folder includes a record of each site visited, the date of the visit, and the activities that occurred at the job site. The student is also given a place to record personal impressions and thoughts about what was heard and seen. Another section of the ICAP folder provides space for the student to keep a record of the careers for which he or she has completed shadowing activities. The final section of the ICAP folder allows students to keep a record of the guest speakers they meet and their impressions of the speaker and the speaker's occupation.



For more information, contact:  
**STC Project Coordinator**  
**Glassboro Public Schools**  
**(856) 881-6366, ext. 318**

**Strategy: Job Shadowing****Partner: Varies**

A job-shadowing program conducted on February 2, 2000 offered 600 students the opportunity to gain career awareness and explore occupations. In the medical field, students were able to gain firsthand experience in X-ray, radiology, dental, nursing, dietary, emergency, respiratory, EKG, and purchasing departments. One student was able to shadow the chief executive officer of a company that provides counseling services. Students interested in the sciences were able to observe lab technicians, engineers, and others working in the field. Other students spent time with researchers experimenting with new methods to grow crops and with the supermarkets where the mature food was being offered to consumers. At the supermarkets, the students were able to shadow baggers, sandwich makers, stock clerks, pharmacy assistants, and store managers. Students interested in law enforcement spent the day with members of the court system and with state and local police officers. A district-wide eighth grade class spent the day with its community administrators, police force, and maintenance department. The county political system allowed fourteen students (one student from each school district) to shadow the county freeholders. The students were made honorary freeholders and they participated in an actual freeholder meeting. The students spent most of the day with county employees. Before the freeholder meeting, the students and freeholders worked together to prepare for the students' evening presentation.

Field trips conducted throughout the year for students in grades K-12 help introduce a variety of careers. At school, students have access to career magazines, The Real Game activity, and Internet resources.

For further information, contact:

**Project Director**  
**Pennsville School District**  
**(856) 540-6203**

**Strategy: Working with Organized Labor****Partner: Local 54**

A teacher and up to eight students with disabilities work at each hotel/casino site. Each student is paired with a nondisabled employee mentor in training positions throughout the hotel, for example, dining-area attendant, line server, wardrobe attendant, environmental services worker, casino scheduling clerk, and administrative services clerk. The partnerships between ACSSSD and the casino/hotel properties and Local 54 have enabled ACSSSD to create “classrooms without walls” within the community, where students can participate in experiential learning and obtain training in a real work environment. The teachers and mentors help students learn specific job skills, appropriate work behaviors, and industry culture and norms. Students are evaluated on a monthly basis using a work-skill evaluation form that was developed in collaboration with the hotel/casino and Local 54. Each student also has a work-site agreement that specifies the roles and responsibilities of the student, parent, teacher, school principal, and employer.

For more information, contact:  
Atlantic County Special Services School District  
(609) 625-5663

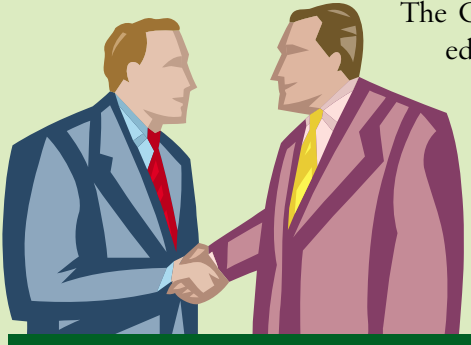


**Strategy: Classroom at an Industry Site****Partner: Sheraton Hotel**

The Monmouth County Vocational School District's educational collaboration with Pacific Concord Management-Sheraton Hotel resulted in the establishment the Culinary Training Program, an exemplary structured learning experience. Collaboration is evidenced by joint training experiences. School instructors train employers at the work site and employers reciprocate by training instructors as they train their own employees. Hotel partners also invite instructors to attend corporate training sessions or conferences, keeping teaching staff current with industry technologies and skills. Students are trained through a variety of structured learning experiences to evaluate hospitality skills and interests. During shadowing activities, junior and senior high school students visit the hotel and its restaurants to explore hospitality careers. The high school students also receive culinary training provided by hotel mentors. Simulation and application activities using academic skills are included to help students solve daily problems. A seamless student transition from secondary program to college placement is facilitated through the articulation of eight college courses (18.5 credits) with the local and regional colleges.

For more information, contact:  
**Monmouth County Vocational School District**  
(732) 431-7943



**Strategy: Involvement with a Local Chamber of Commerce****Partner: Cherry Hill Regional Chamber of Commerce**

The Cherry Hill Regional Chamber of Commerce created the Career Awareness Program to help students increase understanding of careers through a combination of hands-on experiences, structured visitations, and lectures. The program has three main components as follows: job shadowing, business expos (business tours), and speakers in the classroom. The program components are chaired and implemented by members of the committee, which include the staff of the Cherry Hill Regional Chamber of Commerce, representatives from twelve participating high schools, and executives and management staff from the business community. By the end of the 1999-2000 school year, twenty-two business expos and sixteen allied health expos were held, and 100 students were placed in shadowing experiences. In all, more than 1,200 students were involved in the program. The Cherry Hill program is evidence of the success that can be achieved when the public sector, businesses and schools collaborate.

For more information, contact:  
Cherry Hill Regional Chamber of Commerce  
c/o (609) 989-7888

**Strategy: Involvement with Junior Achievement****Partner: Junior Achievement**

Junior Achievement offers several classroom-related instructional units that allow students to apply classroom experiences to work-related projects. Units involve economics, Success Skills 2000, Workplace Internships, Success Now, Company Program, Leadership JA and GLOBE. Economics is a one-semester course in which students learn the fundamental concepts of micro-, macro-, and international economics that are applied in active and engaging ways. Success Skills 2000 helps students acquire competencies and skills necessary for the modern workplace by learning interpersonal skills and problem-solving strategies. Workplace Internships offer students the opportunity to apply job-related skills and develop characteristics for the modern workplace. Success Now engages students in a variety of activities designed to help them develop personal skills appropriate for the workplace and to guide them in their career search. Company Program teaches students how to organize and operate a business enterprise that can be part of a school course or used with school clubs and organizations. Leadership JA helps students become active community leaders by studying about and working in the local economy. GLOBE brings together students from two different nations to form an import/export company that actually engages in international trade.

For more information, contact:  
President  
Junior Achievement of South Jersey, Inc.  
(609) 222-1090



**Strategy: Community Connection with Scouts****Partner: Girl Scouts of America or Boy Scouts of America**

The school district examines the badge categories for different levels of scouts obtained from a scout leader. After comparing the badges available to the types of programs offered in the district, possible modified programs that might be offered for the scouts can be listed. Narrative descriptions are written that include the event number, date and time, location, age/level, fee (which is usually zero), and registration information. An example of a narrative might be that this program will cover topics designed to introduce you to computer applications, including: computer use in classrooms; commonly used software programs; popular computer games; and reviewing computer magazines for content. If time permits, the information is included in the county scout calendar. By completing the course along with other student-initiated procedures, the student meets the requirements for the badge.

For more information, contact:  
Camden County Vocational School District  
(856) 767-7000, ext. 5420

**Strategy: Out-of-School Youth****Partner: New Jersey Youth Corps**

New Jersey Youth Corps has been serving out-of-school youth in NJ since 1985. It is a comprehensive program that ties together several major elements that include counseling, basic skills, community service work, and job placement. Youth Corps enrollees participate full-time by spending one-half day in academic instruction and one-half day in community service work. Community service jobs provide controlled, supervised work situations where corps members can develop maturity skills that are essential for a good prospective employee. Jobs have included such varied activities as building renovations, landscaping, public parks beautification, day care assistance for senior citizens and children, and work in community theatre.



For more information, contact:

**NJ Human Services**  
(609) 588-3898

## Professional Development Programs

### The Academic-Business Connections Conference

Academic-Business Connections (ABC) is a three-day conference for teachers, counselors, and administrators that encourages partnerships with members of the business community. The conference fosters the creation of innovative and meaningful ways to develop curricula that meet the needs of students in support of their postsecondary goals. The conference facilitates the process through both discussion and practical experience. Educators have the opportunity to learn more about the skills New Jersey employers require. Employers serve as hosts for the event and conduct workshops and business tours to stimulate critical thinking by attendees. Internships with some of the business sponsors are also offered at a later point as an option for selected participants.

For more information, contact:

**Marketing and Public Relations Director**  
**NJ Department of Education**  
**(609) 292-7336**

### New Jersey Department of Labor Teacher Internship Program

For three years, the New Jersey Department of Labor has provided the leadership for a six-week School-to-Career/Employment Service (STC/ES) internship project for selected New Jersey educators. Classroom teachers and guidance counselors attend STC/ES orientation sessions in central-state locations and then spend the remainder of their internship learning about the services provided by local ES office personnel and by sister agencies, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Unemployment Insurance and JTPA. Interns also complete a minimum of three job-shadowing experiences at local business/organizations and the interns meet with the leadership of their local Workforce Investment Board and STC consortium grantee. The participants develop lesson plans based on the teacher's summer experiences and the Core Curriculum Content Standards for the state.

For more information, contact:

**New Jersey Department of Labor**  
**(609) 292-3809**



## Business in Partnerships

Businesses are important resources in forming partnerships. Major employers often have a specialized human resources staff who can attend partnership meetings and develop and administer student placements. The urgency of running a business, however, also tends to make firms more isolated from the school system, less connected with other companies, and less aware of school initiatives.

The following strategies can help increase business involvement.

**Personal Networks.** Teachers, administrators, and parents have personal networks within the business community that practitioners can use to help involve businesses. Cultivating these connections builds a sense of community and encourages a culture of participation. To create this kind of network requires thinking of business involvement as a long-term partnership, one that builds trust and fosters relationships based on mutual respect and benefit. Although building upon personal connections is important when recruiting businesses, other approaches also lead to success.

**Employment Specialists.** A number of local school systems use employment specialists under a variety of job titles to develop partnerships with employers. Schools have found them particularly effective in recruiting businesses. Experience suggests that an employment specialist, acting as an intermediary between school and employer, can develop an understanding of the special needs and concerns of businesses. By devoting time and resources specifically to recruiting employers, employment specialists build relationships with businesses that might otherwise have been overlooked.

**Intermediary Organization.** The term “intermediary organization” encompasses a wide range of national, state, and local entities with links to employers, which can be called upon to facilitate the development of partnerships. Some businesses do not have internal structures or systems, such as training departments, to initiate and develop partnerships. Intermediary organizations can help fill this role.



Local intermediary organizations can relieve administrative pressures that often limit business involvement, such as coordinating the details of student assignments, providing payroll and benefit services, and providing information on liability issues. In some instances, they are the “employer of record” for participating students. Local intermediary organizations can also enhance the efficiency of an employer recruitment strategy, providing a single channel of communication and access to large number of businesses. An efficient and coordinated strategy ensures that employers do not receive multiple calls from staff members within the same school system – a situation that can create a burden for potential business partners.

Robert Kemmery, principal of Eastern Technical High School in Baltimore County, Maryland, suggests the following strategies for educators looking for business partners:

- Know your school’s strengths and the businesses’ strengths.
- Draft a business plan.
- Don’t start out asking for money.
- Work as equals.
- Use 20 minutes to make the pitch.